THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news-item express concern over fall in ground water level and resultant fall in quality of water in some parts of Delhi. As per information made available by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), water level showed decline between 0.1m–4.5m in some parts of Delhi during 2001-2002. During May—August, 2002, ground water level has further declined by 0.1m–3m in parts of Delhi. During this period, water level would, otherwise, have shown rise due to rainfall recharge, in case of normal monsoon. The quality of ground water in NCT of Delhi is generally suitable for drinking except at few places where the water is either saline or has excess fluoride, nitrate or heavy metal.

(c) to (e) Water being a State subject, suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development has to be enacted by the States/Union Territories. However, the Union Government has circulated a Model Bill to regulate and control the development of ground water in 1970 and re-circulated it in 1992 and again in 1996 to all the States/Union Territories, including NCT of Delhi. The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA), constituted under the environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has also notified South and South-West districts of NCT of Delhi prohibiting further digging of tubewells without prior approval of the Authority.

(f) The CGWB has taken the following steps to popularise rain water harvesting in the country since January, 2001:–

(i) Conducted 43 mass awareness programmes and 33 training courses on rain water harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water.

(ii) Implementing 89 projects on rain water harvesting under Central Sector Scheme for 'Study of Recharge to Ground Water'.

(iii) Provided technical guidance to individuals/organisation/industries to adopt efficient recharge system throughout the country.

Private entrepreneurs to complete unfinished irrigation projects

1501. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the States have sought private help for unfinished irrigation projects;

(b) if so, what are the total unfinished project in various States;

(c) whether Government have allowed them to take help from the private entrepreneurs to complete these projects; and

(d) if so, by what time the private entrepreneurs will provide help and assistance to the States for completion of the unfinished irrigation projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (d) A High Level Committee was constituted in the Ministry of Water Resources to examine the feasibility of private sector participation in irrigation and multipurpose projects which recommended introducing the concept on a pilot basis in respect of certain projects which did not have inter-State problems or security issues. During IXth Plan, three States viz Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra resorted to market borrowing amounting to about Rs. 2000.00 crore. Rs. 3000.00 crore and Rs. 8000.00 crore respectively. But market borrowing for irrigation sector is found to be unattractive because of long gestation period of the projects which in turn creates difficulty in debt servicing. It has, therefore, been presumed in the report of the Working Group on major and medium irrigation programme for Xth Five Year Plan that funding in irrigation sector is to be mainly from Government sources during Xth Plan.

(b) There are 490 Major, Medium and Extention, Renovation & Modernisation (ERM) Irrigation Projects (159 Major, 242 Medium and 89 ERM Projects) which are ongoing in the various States.

Utilization of Rivers Water

1502. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 70 per cent of the river water in India remains unutilized while China like other advanced countries is utilising the full potential of its rivers;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a time has come when we must take up mega-multi-purpose water resources projects at an accelerated pace in order to solve our multi-farious problems; and

(c) if so, what are Government's plans in this regard?